



FONASBA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Portugal – 02.07.2024

Survey Results: Medical evacuation from ship to helicopter

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of our seafarers, we conducted a survey regarding the procedures and policies surrounding medical evacuations from ships by helicopter. The valuable input received has helped us better understand the current landscape and advocate for necessary improvements.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Regulatory Obligation:

- Is the provision of helicopter medical evacuation services considered a mandatory obligation by your national maritime authorities?
 - If yes, please provide details on the specific regulations or guidelines that mandate this service.
 - If no, please explain under what circumstances these services are provided and who typically initiates them.

YOUR COUNTRY	Regulatory Obligation: Is the provision of helicopter medical evacuation services considered a mandatory obligation by your national maritime authorities?
Algeria	No. N/a
Argentina	Within the "International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea" (SOLAS 74), Chapter V, Rule 7, the Argentine Republic implemented the Search and Rescue Service, made up of two forces: the Navy and the Argentine Naval Prefecture (PNA). The PNA compulsorily provides the medical radio consultation service, and both institutions provide the aerial evacuation service (SAR).
Croatia	The Helicopter Emergency Medical Service in Croatia is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health. Full details are available at https://www.hhms.hr/en/
Denmark	Yes, it is the Coast Guard and Air Force that provide emergency helicopter service in case of emergencies at sea. It is the law "Beredskabsloven" that governs.



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France	<p>Rescue is mandatory in the maritime world. The state provides the service upon demand. Private means may be used by requisition.</p>
Germany	<p>It is not mandatory, but it is part of the SAR-system!</p>
Hungary	<p>We are a landlocked country :)</p>
Israel	<p>We will describe to you shortly how emergency medical assistance is being delivered in general, including to seafarers in our small country. We have our Government Non-Profit Organization named the Red Shield of David (RSOD) Service. This organization was established by law in 1950. The principles of its establishment were based on the various Geneva Conventions Decisions taken between the years 1864 to 1949(A year after our young state was actually established). The main urgent services are delivered by the RSOD-owned or hired Ambulances. In case a very urgent evacuation is required, the RSOD is hiring a Helicopter service from Privately Owned Helicopter Operators. During my/our tenure of 12 years in the Chamber I/we can't remember a case where a Seafarer was evacuated by a Helicopter from a vessel to a hospital. FYI, the main ports in Israel are actually located very close to major hospitals. Maybe this is the reason that if there was a CREW Member's urgent evacuation to a nearby hospital, it was done by an ambulance. The costs of any evacuation are at the end of the day on behalf of the shipowner and/or his insurance. The shipping Agent will order the service, pay for it, and ask the reimbursement for it from the Ship Owner.</p>
Japan	<p>No, when requested by the vessel medical institution or the Japan Coast Guard.</p>
Lebanon	<p>No, this service is not available in Lebanon.</p>
Malaysia	<p>No. This provision is unclear whether the helicopter service is available. Normally, the ship proceeds to the nearest port to disembark crew by boat.</p>
Malta	<p>We can disembark sick patients either by helicopter or by launch at OPL Malta.</p>
Malta	<p>No. This depends on a case-by-case basis, depending on the severity of the case and if there are any life-threatening situations. Generally, in the event of an emergency, either 112 is called or, in the case of vessels, via VHF Ch. 12 (Valletta Traffic Services) or via the agent directly. In these cases, if the need for a med evacuation is necessary via Helicopter service, the AFM will be contacted to proceed accordingly. Otherwise, a service launch or ambulance will be coordinated.</p>
Netherlands	<p>See the following website for further details: https://kustwacht.nl/en/.</p>
Slovenia	<p>No. When no other options are available to evacuate an injured seaman, helicopter assistance can be requested. This service is provided by the Slovenian military.</p>
Sweden	<p>Yes, but I don't know the regulations behind it.</p>



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Türkiye	The medical helicopter evacuation services are not a mandatory obligation and might be used depending on the urgency and the vessel's location. The agent initiates the procedures by informing the health authorities and all concerned parties.
United Arab Emirates	No. We need approval from several Authorities.
United States	Helicopter Medical Evacuations are provided by the US Coast Guard

2. Cost Responsibility:

- Are helicopter medical evacuation services provided free of charge as part of a state obligation?
 - Yes
 - No
- If these services are not free of charge, what entities or individuals are typically responsible for covering the costs?

YOUR COUNTRY	Cost Responsibility: Are helicopter medical evacuation services provided free of charge as part of a state obligation? Yes / No	If these services are not free of charge, what entities or individuals are typically responsible for covering the costs?
Algeria	N/A	N/A
Argentina	No. Air evacuations carried out on national flag vessels are carried out free of charge, but not on foreign flag vessels.	The costs of aerial evacuations carried out on national flag vessels are covered by the SAR Authorities themselves. However, if the evacuated crew members have a Work Risk Insurance Company (ART) and the operation occurred as a result of a work accident, it is the ART that bears the costs. In the case of foreign ships, they pay for it.
Croatia	Yes	N/A
Denmark	Yes	N/A
France	No	The ship owner is usually responsible for costs.
Germany	Generally, no.	
Hungary	No	See no 5.



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Israel	Please refer to the note under question 1.	
Japan	NO	Related party or shipping company.
Lebanon	N/A	N/A
Malaysia	Not available	As above, it is unclear whether authorities, namely the Coastguard known as Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA), can arrange. If arranged through a private operator, then the owners will need to pay for the service.
Malta	In the past, helicopter service by AFM was not invoiced; however, we are not sure nowadays whether there is a charge, as we haven't had a case for a good year or so now.	If any private small plane is used, then a charge is levied by the private helicopter company.
Malta	Generally, yes.	
Netherlands		
Slovenia	No	Insurance companies.
Sweden	Yes, if the transport is required for medical reasons.	The National Maritime Administration.
Türkiye	The dues for medical evacuation, either by helicopter or by means of sanitary authorities' boats or coast guard boats, are debited to the ship's agent by the authority or entity providing the service.	The ship agents are always responsible for payment of all the costs related to the medical assistance provided.
United Arab Emirates	No records available.	Costs, if any, to be settled by owners and claimed from PNI Club.
United States	Free of charge.	

3. Cost Details:

- If there is a charge for helicopter medical evacuation services, how much is typically charged per hour?
 - Please provide a breakdown of the costs if available (e.g., basic rate, additional fees, etc.).
 - Are there any circumstances under which these costs might be subsidized or reduced?

YOUR COUNTRY	Cost Details: If there is a charge for helicopter medical evacuation services, how much is typically charged per hour? Please provide a breakdown of the costs if available (e.g., basic rate, add	
Algeria	N/A	



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Argentina	The costs of aerial evacuations are established by administrative decisions of the SAR Authorities. Normally, they are charged for the time of use of the media involved, and their value is around three thousand American dollars per hour.
Croatia	N/A
Denmark	N/A
France	Not available.
Germany	
Hungary	See no 5.
Israel	Please refer to the note under question 1.
Japan	It depends on the situation, and it is not uninformed.
Lebanon	N/A
Malaysia	Not available.
Malta	Unknown AFM charges if they charge at all nowadays.
Malta	
Netherlands	
Slovenia	It depends on a case-by-case basis; there are no public tariffs available.
Sweden	-
Türkiye	There is no fixed tariff for such services, and costs depend on the vehicle used, the place of boarding the vessels, and all additional services rendered.
United Arab Emirates	No records available.
United States	

4. Service Availability:

- How frequently are helicopter medical evacuation services utilized in your operations?
 - Rarely
 - Occasionally
 - Frequently
- Are there any notable challenges or limitations in accessing these services in your area?



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YOUR COUNTRY	Service Availability: How frequently are helicopter medical evacuation services utilized in your operations? Rarely / Occasionally / Frequently
Algeria	N/A
Argentina	In our country, approximately 15 aerial evacuations are carried out per year.
Croatia	Rarely.
Denmark	Rarely.
France	Occasionally.
Germany	Rarely.
Hungary	See no 5.
Israel	Please refer to the note under question 1.
Japan	Rarely.
Lebanon	N/A
Malaysia	Rarely.
Malta	Rarely.
Malta	
Netherlands	
Slovenia	Rarely.
Sweden	Rarely.
Türkiye	Helicopter medical evacuation is very rarely utilized in our country.
United Arab Emirates	Very rarely.
United States	Statistics not broken out by the USCG.



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5. Experience and Feedback:

- Have you or your crew members had any direct experiences with helicopter medical evacuations? If so, please share any insights or feedback regarding the process.
- Are there any suggestions or recommendations you would like to make to improve the service?

YOUR COUNTRY	Experience and Feedback: Have you or your crew members had any direct experiences with helicopter medical evacuations? If so, please share any insights or feedback regarding the process.	Are there any suggestions or recommendations you would like to make to improve the service?
Algeria	No	No
Argentina	Yes. Air-evacuation operations are very risky. They are generally carried out in the open sea, of crew members of fishing vessels in very adverse weather conditions. Since 2010, the PNA has put a physician on board the helicopter along with rescue swimmers and thus be able to provide the crew member with first aid on the ship and, based on the diagnosis, evaluate together with the captain of the ship, their extraction and referral to a medical centre. The Argentine SAR area of responsibility is very extensive, since it goes beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (200 miles). Therefore, for reasons of availability and distribution of means, the PNA carries out aerial evacuations within the EEZ and the Navy, outside it, with ships that can transport helicopters, increasing its radius of action.	Argentina is one of the countries in America with the highest number of aerial evacuations on the high seas. However, the State's resources for these operations are limited, and it is suggested, to maximize and improve the efficiency of the services provided, to invest in the acquisition of means with greater autonomy and better technology.
Croatia	No direct experiences with helicopter medical evacuations.	N/A
Denmark	N/A	N/A
France		
Germany	No	No!
Hungary	See no 5.	See no 5.



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Israel	Please refer to the note under question 1.	
Japan	NO EXPERIENCE	NONE IN PARTICULAR
Lebanon	NO	N/A
Malaysia	No, we normally arrange through a boat.	None since it is not available.
Malta	Whenever we used the helicopter service, the service was first class.	Not really, as we are well-equipped in Malta for such emergencies.
Malta		
Netherlands		
Slovenia	No	No
Sweden	?	
Türkiye	Our members do not have any feedback with respect to helicopter evacuation, since generally the medical evacuations are provided by motor launches.	No
United Arab Emirates	No	N/A.
United States		

Your cooperation in completing this survey has been greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time and valuable input.